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ABSTRACT

This poll was administered to a total of 282 prospective college freshmen at the State University of New York at Buffalo to elicit their attitudes toward and opinions of such items as drug use and addiction, violence as opposed to nonviolence in civil protests, and the 18 year-old vote. At least 74% of the students responding to Youthpoll disagreed with: violence in demonstrations, taking of hard drugs, and characterizing the activist as a "mental case." At least 78% approved of: writing to public officials, circulating petitions, nonviolent change, protesting nonviolently, tutoring, 18 year-old voting, and campaigning for public officials. (HS)

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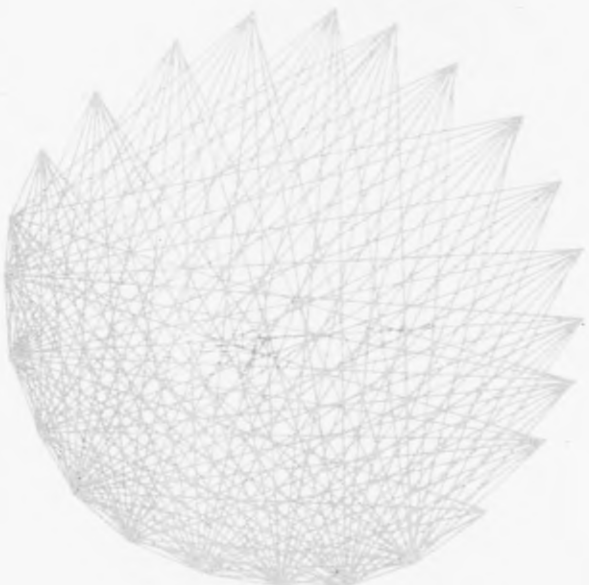
YOUTHPOLL



1972 Freshmen

HE 003 789

Student Testing and Research Center
Division of Student Affairs and Services
State University of New York at Buffalo

ED 072741

YOUTHPOLL

1972 Freshman Class

by

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1972

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YOUTHPOLL RESULTS

State University of New York at Buffalo

October 1972

The Youthpoll was administered twice during the 1972 Summer Planning Conferences to a total group of two hundred eighty-two respondents. The randomly selected session dates were June 28th and July 31st. There were somewhat more resident students than commuters in the sample, and more males than females. Results may not be generalized to the entire 1972 Freshman Class since the participants in the SPC were not randomly selected.

Table 1 displays information about values of the group, i.e., approval, personal participation, and future participation of a variety of general activities.

Table 2 presents the same data in percents.

Tables 1 and 2 show the variety of value combinations. Such combinations range from those who approve but exclude themselves from present or future participation, to those who approve of an activity but have not participated in it and are uncertain as to future participation.

Table 3 displays data about student opinions on such topics as student unrest on campus, ecology i.e., pollution, population control, and military involvement. The three basic divisions within the table are coded as Agree, Disagree, and Undecided. Agree is a combination of the options strongly agree and agree with this statement; Disagree combines strongly disagree and disagree, and Undecided represents the choice of uncertain about this statement. The symbol # appearing before statements in the percents column shows that the total percent did not equal 100. This is due to lack of response or uncodable responses.

Table 4 is a rank order based on individual percentage and total nomination percents of problems reported by the respondents. Problems offered for consideration ranged from drug addiction to superficiality and lack of meaning in life. Respondents were asked to rank three problems only, in descending order of importance. An option "Other" was available for a single written problem within the desired options. There were a number of students who took advantage of this option to express a first, second or third rated problem.

Both Tables 5 and 6 show responses to questions about family relations, personal interactions with others, future goals upon completion of a formal education, and planned residence status for the Fall 1972 semester. The data reported in these two tables is in percent. A category labeled omit/blank indicates the absence of response for a particular issue or question.

SUMMARY

At least 74% of the students responding to Youthpoll disagreed with:

violence in demonstrations
taking of hard drugs
characterizing the activist as a 'mental case'.

At least 78% approved of:

writing to public officials
circulating petitions
non-violent change
protesting non-violently
tutoring
18 year old voting
campaigning for public officials.

TABLE 1

1. General Activities

Use this key to indicate your responses: In Column I
1) I approve 2) Don't know 3) I disapprove

Use this key to indicate your responses: In Column II
4) I have 5) I have not

Use this key to indicate your responses: In Column III
6) I would 7) It depends 8) I would not

For example: I II III
1 4 6 "Going to college"

I approve, I have, and I would go to college.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8		
182	75	23	46	232	86	163	34	9	Carrying picket signs
114	66	180	115	153	101	49	125	13	Taking soft drugs
8	21	251	14	262	3	14	261	12	Taking hard drugs
241	30	9	112	164	199	67	11	11	Demonstrating non-violently for a just cause
83	97	97	26	246	28	148	100	18	Demonstrating non-violently for any cause
183	63	33	244	29	165	81	31	11	Taking alcohol
231	40	8	159	119	163	102	12	15	Circulating petitions
17	59	204	161	109	31	112	133	14	Cheating
58	53	169	118	157	50	41	189	7	Using tobacco
259	14	5	136	139	207	59	12	11	Writing to public officials
25	53	202	7	268	10	68	200	11	Demonstrating violently for a just cause
9	22	247	4	270	2	22	252	15	Demonstrating violently for any cause
244	31	6	53	224	170	90	18	8	Tutoring non-white minority group students
223	42	14	79	194	143	104	28	14	Campaigning for public officials
Approve	Don't Know	Disapprove	Have	Have Not	Would	Depends	Would Not	Blank	

TABLE 2

What is your reaction to these activities?

ACTIVITIES	A	DK	DA	H	HN	W	D	WN
Carrying picket signs	65%	27%	8%	10%	82%	28%	58%	12%
Taking "soft drugs" (marijuana, etc.)	40%	23%	36%	42%	54%	36%	17%	44%
Taking hard drugs (herion, etc.)	3%	7%	89%	5%	93%	1%	5%	93%
Demonstrating non-violently for a just cause	86%	11%	3%	40%	58%	71%	24%	4%
Demonstrating non-violently for any cause	29%	34%	34%	9%	88%	10%	53%	36%
Taking alcohol	65%	22%	12%	87%	10%	59%	29%	11%
Circulating petitions	82%	14%	3%	54%	42%	58%	36%	4%
Cheating	6%	21%	72%	57%	39%	11%	40%	47%
Using tobacco	21%	19%	60%	42%	56%	18%	15%	67%
Writing to public officials	92%	5%	2%	48%	49%	73%	21%	4%
Demonstrating violently (break windows, set fires) for a just cause	9%	19%	72%	3%	95%	4%	24%	71%
Demonstrating violently (break windows, set fires) for any cause	3%	8%	88%	1%	96%	1%	8%	90%
Tutoring non-white minority groups	87%	11%	2%	19%	79%	60%	32%	6%
Campaigning for public officials	79%	15%	5%	69%	69%	51%	37%	10%

Code: A = Approve of Named Activity
DK = Don't know about it
DA = Disapprove of it
H = Have participated in it
HN = Have not participated in it
W = Would participate in it in the future
D = It depends
WN = Would not participate in it

TABLE 3

What do you think about these important topics?

AG*	UN	DIS	I think that:
#92%	7%	0%	Eighteen year olds are mature enough to be given the right to vote.
61%	17%	22%	It should be legal for anyone to get an abortion upon request.
#15%	28%	56%	To control pollution, all we need to do is enforce existing laws.
25%	29%	46%	To combat over-population, there should be a special "reward" payment to families with two or fewer children.
#47%	23%	29%	The use of marijuana should be legalized.
#16%	38%	45%	Our country should NEVER engage in military activity outside the U.S.
#84%	8%	6%	There should be more investigations of the honesty and integrity of government officials.
#47%	40%	12%	I expect another MAJOR war within my lifetime.
# 9%	16%	74%	Only by violence can Blacks gain what Whites have deprived them of for 300 years.
#12%	16%	71%	College administrators should call the police at the first sign of trouble.
#44%	32%	23%	Student unrest is PRIMARILY the result of the expanding social concern of students.
#25%	38%	35%	Student unrest is PRIMARILY the result of administrators who do not understand student needs.
#32%	31%	36%	MOST students are not interested in a lot of change.
#54%	29%	15%	MOST students share the activist's concern for social and political improvement but disagree with the activist's tactics.
#78%	15%	5%	MOST students want non-violent change.
#90%	6%	2%	ANY student should be allowed to protest non-violently without fear of reprisal.

TABLE 3
(Cont'd.)
What do you think about these important topics?

AG*	UN	DIS	I think that:
#46%	29%	24%	MANY student protestors are just having fun rather than being serious activists.
#53%	35%	10%	Activists speak in terms of their rights but rarely about their responsibilities.
# 4%	17%	76%	The activist can be characterized as a "Mental Case".
#16%	16%	66%	Most adults want youths to live by very strict "Puritan" values.
#27%	25%	45%	Most adults are hypocrites - they preach one thing but do another.
#30%	18%	48%	Most adults think today's youths are "going to pot" - are hostile, disrespectable, inconsiderate, etc.
#65%	16%	17%	Most adults think that youths with beards, long hair, "hippie" dress, will behave in a certain way, (i.e., disrespectfully).
#24%	32%	42%	Most adults understand and respect young people.
#15%	26%	56%	Most adults are so preoccupied with their own lives they have no time for their children.
#20%	33%	44%	Most adults feel that their money is a substitute for love, respect, and understanding.
#54%	24%	19%	Most adults treat teenagers as "children" long after they're ready to make their own decisions.

*AG is a combination of "strongly agree" and "agree" answers.

DIS is a combination of "strongly disagree" and "disagree" answers.

UN is uncertain.

Where total percentages do not equal 100%, the difference is due to nonresponse to the item or uncodable responses.

TABLE 4

N.B. ALL DATA REPORTED HERE ARE IN PERCENT AND RANK ORDER.

Our nation faces many problems today. Of the following list, which do you think are the most important? Use this key:

Beside the SINGLE-most important issue, write 1.
Beside the SECOND-most important issue, write 2.
Beside the THIRD -most important issue, write 3.

Rate just three, 1 - 2 - 3.

RANK ORDER	ISSUE	1	2	3	TOTAL
1	Pollution	12	20	15	47
2.5	Vietnam War	14	11	8	33
2.5	Superficiality and lack of meaning in life	21	6	6	33
4	Racial strife	7	14	11	32
5	Over-population	8	11	8	27
6	Drug addiction	3	6	12	21
7	Big government	4	6	10	20
8	Inflation	4	6	8	18
9	*Other (write in)[1]	10	3	3	16
10	Adult understanding of youth	3	2	2	7
11	Unrest on campuses	0	*1	0	1
	NO RESPONSE	14	14	17	45

*As a point of interest, the actual percentage is .7.

[1]See Appendix (Table 4), write in responses, "Other".

TABLE 5

N.B. ALL DATA REPORTED HERE ARE IN PERCENTS

In questions 4 through 13, check just ONE answer to each question.

4. If you are called in the draft, how do you personally feel you will react? (Women: answer the way you would prefer a man should react.) CHECK ONLY ONE

(1) 5 I feel it is my duty to serve and will do so willingly.

(2) 23 I am not willing but will go if called.

(3) 22 At this stage, I am not sure what I will do.

(4) 11 I will try to obtain some form of non-combat status in uniform.

(5) 22 I will seriously think of becoming some form of conscientious objector.

(6) 8 I will consider avoiding the draft by going to Canada or some other country.

(7) 4 I will consider going to jail rather than being forced to serve.

6 Omitted

5. After you complete your formal education, where do you now think you will most prefer to work? CHECK ONLY ONE

(1) 12 In industry.

(2) 8 In government (city, county, state, federal).

*(3) 0 In the military service as a career.

(4) 33 In a social service type of job.

(5) 7 In teaching.

(6) 6 Temporarily in the Peace Corps or VISTA.

(7) 5 In just a routine job so I have time to think and relate.

(8) 1 I will want to drop out and not work.

(9) 20 I don't have the slightest idea.

7 Omitted.

*The actual percentage is .4.

TABLE 5
(Cont'd.)

N.B. ALL DATA REPORTED HERE ARE IN PERCENTS

6. In my relations with others of about my own age, I: CHECK ONLY ONE

(1) 3 Am aloof and distant

(2) 4 Actively seek but do not achieve closer relationships.

(3) 31 Enjoy moderate attachments to one or more other persons.

(4) 56 Enjoy close relationships with one or more other persons.

7 Omitted

7. My family relationships can be best characterized as: CHECK ONLY ONE

(1) 52 I am close to both parents.

(2) 19 I am close to my mother.

(3) 5 I am close to my father.

(4) 17 I am close to neither of my parents.

7 Omitted

8. Which one of the following statements is closest to describing your parents' attitudes toward you? CHECK ONLY ONE

(1) 13 They support me in all my decisions and subsequent actions.

(2) 62 They support me in all my decisions but do not always agree with my actions.

(3) 6 They reject all my decisions but do not interfere.

(4) 5 They reject my decisions and forbid me to become involved.

15 Omitted

TABLE 5
(Cont'd.)

N.B. ALL DATA REPORTED HERE ARE IN PERCENTS.

9. Who in your parental family really had the final "say" about things concerning you (discipline, staying out late, special privileges, etc.)? Check one that most closely describes your own experience. CHECK ONLY ONE

(1) 8 It was almost entirely up to my father.

(2) 37 More often up to father than mother.

(3) 26 More often up to mother than father.

(4) 11 Almost entirely up to mother.

(5) 8 In my family, I received virtually no direction after I became a teenager.

10 Omitted.

10. In your own family, how many children would you eventually like to have? CHECK ONLY ONE

6 None 3 One 55 Two 17 Three 9 Four or more 10 Omitted

11. What do you estimate your family's annual income to be? (Indicate total income before taxes.) CHECK JUST ONE

(1) 4 Less than $3,000 a year
(2) 1 $3,000 to $4,999
(3) 8 $5,000 to $7,499
(4) 11 $7,500 to $9,999
(5) 22 $10,000 to $14,999.
(6) 13 $15,000 to $19,999.
(7) 9 $20,000 to $24,000
(8) 10 $25,000 and over
(9) 4 I consider this information confidential.
(10) 10 I don't know
9 Omitted

12. I am: 155 male 99 female 28 Omitted
[These data are actual numbers.]

13. During my first semester at SUNYAB I will live:

131 in University housing. 117 in my parents' home.

11 other 23 Omitted

[These data are actual numbers.]

APPENDIX

TABLE 4

Student Responses to "Other" Choice

1	Just plain selfishness - it's at the root of every problem in life
1	Priorities of government spending
1	Organized crime
1	Oppression of the poor
1	Love
1	Apathy
1	Distrust for others and refusal to deny oneself to help others
1	Corruption and politicking in government
1	Competition
1	Communism or capitalism
1	Vietnam and the gap it has created between the government and the people - a lack of trust in the government and elected officials
1	Capitalism
1	Lack of love and understanding among all people
1	Economic inequalities
1	Sexist discrimination
1	Lack of communication
1	Contradictions of a capitalist society
1	Change in social conditions
1	Gun control (an end to violence)
1	Society in general
1	Lack of morals, family ties, too accelerated society - people get lost

APPENDIX

Table 4 - (Cont'd.)

1	Lack of social understanding
1	No direction or goals
1	Any war
1	Rejection of God
1	Reparation of people from government/i.e., elected officials
1	Corrupt government officials
2	Greed
2	Lack of understanding
2	Dishonesty of public officials
2	Lack of society as a whole admitting its failure but also its ability to ease if not completely remedy all the above problems plus other social and moral values of today's world.
2	Undernourished people
2	Helping of handicapped people
3	Youth not tolerating adults
3	Cold wars
3	Lack of law enforcement and stiff jail sentences e.g., capital punishment should be legal.
3	Richard Nixon
3	Violence
3	Apathy